I. Remarks

A. Procedural History

The Applicant filed the parent application to the present one on April 11, 1997. In a first Office Action, the Examiner rejected the claims in light if U.S. Patent No. 5,661,578 to Habing et al. The Examiner reiterated that rejection in a Final Office Action. In a telephone conference after the Final Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the disclosed invention had clear novelty, but that the claims did not quite distinguish themselves from Habing. The Applicant filed an amendment and response to the Final Office Action on August 5, 1999, but in an Advisory Action dated September 1, 1999, the Examiner indicated that amendment would not be entered because it would raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. The Applicant then filed this CPA including a preliminary amendment identical in substance to the amendment and response of August 5, 1999.

In an Office Action dated October 28, 1999, the Examiner dropped the rejection in light of the Habing reference and, this time, rejected all pending claims 1-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or 35 U.S.C. § 103, in light of U.S. Patent No. 5,844,773 to Mahli. Accordingly, the rejection in light of Habing has been traversed.

B. Response to Rejections In Light of Mahli

The Applicant submits that the Malhi reference teaches no more with respect to the present invention than the admitted prior art. Like the admitted prior art, Mahli discloses a notebook computer comprising a display screen 25 and a backing case 22. In between the display screen 25 and backing case 22 is a lightguide 80. See Mahli, Fig. 4 and col. 4, lines 13-

14 ("a light guide 80 positioned between the display board 75 [and the display screen 25] and the case back 70"). Like the admitted prior art, Mahli discloses that the lightguide 80 is used to disperse light relatively uniformly along the surface of the LCD 50. See Mahli, col. 4, lines 24-26. And like the admitted prior art, the backing case 22 is used as a housing to protect internal display components. See Mahli, col. 3, lines 19-25. Thus, like the admitted prior art, the lightguide 80 and backing cases 22 or Mahli are separate structural components performing separate functions -- i.e., conducting light and protecting internal components, respectively.

In the present invention, the integral LCD housing/lightpipe is performing two distinct functions; the light pipe function and the protective cover or housing function. The prior art used two distinct structural elements to perform these function, whereas here, only one structural element -- the LCD housing -- is being used. This novel aspect of the present invention is particularly pointed out in each of the independent claims. See claim 1 ("wherein the LCD housing functions as a light pipe for conducting light from the light source to the LCD and protects the LCD"), claim 16 ("second means for housing the display panel, wherein the second means functions as a light pipe and conducts light between the first means for generating light and the display panel"), and claim 17 ("wherein the LCD housing functions as a light pipe for illuminating the LCD and protects the LCD"). Quite simply, neither Mahli nor Habing nor the admitted prior art nor any other cited reference discloses that the LCD housing may function as a light pipe as disclosed and claimed. These independent claims and, *a fortiori*, claims dependent therefrom, are allowable over all cited references.

In view of the above preceding remarks, it is urged respectfully that the rejection of the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that the claims be allowed. However, if the

Examiner believes that any issues remain unresolved, he is invited to telephone the undersigned

to expedite allowance. Upon receiving the Notice of Allowance, the applicant will submit formal

drawings.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:_____12/29/99_____

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